

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

Please amend the claims as follows:

1. (Previously Presented) A method of expanding tubing, the method comprising:
applying a varying fluid pressure to the tubing;
providing an expansion device; and
vibrating at least one of the tubing and the device.
2. (Original) The method of claim 1, wherein the tubing is expanded downhole.
3. (Original) The method of claim 1, wherein the varying fluid pressure acts across a wall of the tubing.
4. (Original) The method of claim 1, wherein the pressure within the tubing is varied.
5. (Original) The method of claim 1, wherein the pressure externally of the tubing is varied.
6. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 1, further comprising pumping fluid into a volume of fluid operatively associated with the tubing.
7. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 1, further comprising locating a body of varying volume in a volume of fluid operatively associated with the tubing.
8. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 1, further comprising moving a wall portion defining a boundary of a volume of fluid operatively associated with the tubing.

9. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 1, further providing a pressurized fluid source.
10. (Original) The method of claim 9, wherein fluid is supplied at varying pressure from the source.
11. (Original) The method of claim 10, wherein fluid is delivered to the tubing from the source in a manner so as to vary the fluid pressure.
12. (Original) The method of claim 1, wherein an increase in pressure within the tubing is accompanied by a reduction in pressure externally of the tubing.
13. (Original) The method of claim 1, wherein fluid pressure externally of the tubing is maintained at a relatively low level by providing a relatively low density fluid externally of the tubing.
14. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 13, further comprising injecting a low density fluid into fluid surrounding the tubing.
15. (Original) The method of claim 1, wherein a volume of fluid externally of the tubing is at least partially isolated from a head of fluid above the tubing.
16. (Original) The method of claim 1, wherein fluid pressure internally of the tubing is maintained at a relatively high level by providing a relatively high density fluid internally of the tubing.
17. (Original) The method of claim 1, wherein a cycling fluid pressure is applied to the tubing.

18. (Original) The method of claim 1, wherein a portion of tubing to be expanded is at least partially isolated from ambient fluid by at least one seal, and a varying pressure differential is maintained across the at least one seal.
19. (Original) The method of claim 18, wherein a degree of leakage occurs across the at least one seal.
20. (Original) The method of claim 19, wherein leaking fluid lubricates the seal.
21. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 20, further comprising producing a pressure pulse, and an associated elevated fluid pressure, which then decays as leakage occurs across the seal.
22. (Original) The method of claim 18, wherein the seal is moved relative to the tubing as the tubing is expanded.
23. (Original) The method of claim 1, wherein tubing expansion takes place substantially as a result of differential fluid pressure applied across the tubing wall.
24. (Cancelled)
25. (Original) The method of claim 1, wherein the tubing is constrained such that only a limited degree of expansion is achievable.
26. (Original) The method of claim 25, wherein the tubing is located within a slightly larger bore.
27. (Original) The method of claim 1, wherein the tubing is mechanically formed during expansion.

28. (Original) The method of claim 1, wherein fluid pressure within the tubing is maintained at a base pressure, upon which base pressure a pressure increase is superimposed.
29. (Original) The method of claim 28, wherein pressure pulses are superimposed on the base pressure.
30. (Original) The method of claim 29, wherein the pressure increase takes the pressure acting on the tubing wall to within 10% of the yield pressure of the tubing wall.
31. (Original) The method of claim 29, wherein the pressure increase takes the pressure acting on the tubing wall to within 5% of the yield pressure of the tubing wall.
32. (Original) The method of claim 28, wherein the pressure increase takes the pressure acting on the tubing wall to at least the yield pressure of the tubing wall.
33. (Original) The method of claim 1, wherein a mechanical device is advanced through the tubing to occupy an increased volume within the tubing created at least in part by the varying fluid pressure.
34. (Original) The method of claim 33, wherein the device is advanced in stepwise fashion in concert with a series of variations in fluid pressure.
35. (Original) The method of claim 1, wherein a mechanical expansion force is applied to the tubing wall.
36. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 1, wherein the expansion device retains expansion induced at least in part by fluid pressure.

37. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 36, wherein during periods of lower pressure the expansion device retains expansion produced during periods of elevated fluid pressure.

38. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 36, wherein the expansion device comprises a shallow angle cone that is advanced through the tubing to retain expansion.

39. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 1, wherein the expansion device is translated relative to the tubing by fluid pressure.

40. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 1, wherein the expansion device is located between a pair of seals.

41. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 1, wherein a leading seal is provided on the expansion device and the device is translated relative to the tubing by a pressure differential across the seal.

42. (Original) The method of claim 1, wherein the varying pressure is applied to a substantially isolated volume of fluid located between a pair of seals.

43. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 1, wherein the expansion device is provided within a substantially isolated volume located between a pair of seals.

44. (Original) The method of claim 42, wherein the varying pressure is created by at least one of: a pulse generator operatively associated with the isolated volume; and by supplying at least one of elevated pressure fluid and pressure pulses from a source externally of the isolated volume.

45. (Original) The method of claim 1, wherein fluid operatively associated with the tubing is selected for its lubricating properties.

46. (Original) The method of claim 1, wherein fluid operatively associated with the tubing is selected for its flow characteristics.

47. (Original) The method of claim 1, wherein a multitude of bearing particles are provided in fluid operatively associated within the tubing.

48. (Original) The method of claim 1, further comprising providing a mechanical device for engaging the tubing and supplying fluid to contacting surfaces of the device and the tubing.

49. (Cancelled)

50. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 1, further applying a motive force to the expansion device to translate the expansion device relative to the tubing.

51. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 50, wherein the expansion device is translated by being pulled through the tubing.

52. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 50, wherein the expansion device is translated by being pushed through the tubing.

53. (Original) The method of claim 50, wherein the motive force comprises a fluid pressure force.

54. (Original) The method of claim 50, wherein the motive force comprises a mechanical force.

55. (Original) The method of claim 54, wherein the motive force is provided by a downhole tractor.

56. (Previously Presented) An apparatus for expanding tubing downhole, the apparatus comprising:

- a pressurizing system for applying a varying fluid pressure to the tubing;
- an expansion device; and
- a system for vibrating at least one of the expansion device and the tubing.

57. (Previously Presented) The apparatus of claim 56, wherein the pressurizing system is adapted to create a fluid pressure differential across a wall of the tubing.

58. (Previously Presented) The apparatus of claim 56, wherein the pressurizing system is adapted to vary the pressure within the tubing.

59. (Previously Presented) The apparatus of claim 56, wherein the means is adapted to vary the pressure externally of the tubing.

60. – 65. (Cancelled)

66. (Previously Presented) The apparatus of claim 56, wherein the pressurizing system comprises means for increasing the pressure within the tubing while reducing the pressure externally of the tubing.

67. – 69. (Cancelled)

70. (Original) The apparatus of claim 56, further comprising means for isolating a portion of tubing to be expanded from ambient fluid.

71. (Original) The apparatus of claim 70, wherein said isolating means comprises at least one seal.

72. (Original) The apparatus of claim 71, wherein said isolating means comprises at least two spaced seals for containing a volume of fluid therebetween.

73. (Original) The apparatus of claim 71, wherein said seal is adapted to permit a degree of leakage thereacross.

74. (Original) The apparatus of claim 71, wherein the seal comprises a plurality of seal members, each seal member adapted to maintain a fluid pressure differential thereacross.

75. (Original) The apparatus of claim 74, wherein the seal comprises at least five seal members.

76. (Original) The apparatus of claim 74, wherein the number of seal members is selected to provide for redundancy.

77. (Original) The apparatus of claim 74, wherein the seal comprises a labyrinth seal.

78. (Previously Presented) The apparatus of claim 56, wherein said pressurizing system comprises means creating a cycling fluid pressure.

79. (Previously Presented) The apparatus of claim 56, wherein the pressurizing system is adapted to produce at least one pressure pulse.

80. (Cancelled)

81. (Previously Presented) The apparatus of claim 56, wherein the pressurizing system is adapted to maintain fluid pressure within the tubing at a base pressure below the yield pressure of the wall of the tubing and superimpose pressure pulses thereupon, taking

the fluid pressure to at least the yield pressure of the wall of the tubing, to induce plastic deformation of the tubing.

82. – 83. (Cancelled)

84. (Previously Presented) The apparatus of claim 56, wherein the expansion device comprises an expansion cone.

85. (Previously Presented) The apparatus of claim 56, wherein the expansion device comprises a rotary expansion device.

86. (Previously Presented) The apparatus of claim 56, wherein the expansion device is adapted to stabilize a tubing expansion process.

87. (Previously Presented) The apparatus of claim 56, wherein the expansion device is adapted to assist in achieving a desired expanded tubing form.

88. (Previously Presented) The apparatus of claim 56, wherein the expansion device is adapted to retain expansion induced by elevated fluid pressure.

89. (Previously Presented) The apparatus of claim 56, wherein the expansion device comprises a shallow angle cone.

90. (Original) The apparatus of claim 89, wherein the cone angle no more than 11 degrees.

91. (Previously Presented) The apparatus of claim 56, wherein the expansion device is adapted to be advanced through expanding tubing in concert with periods of elevated pressure.

92. (Previously Presented) The apparatus of claim 56, further comprising drive means for translating the expansion device through the tubing.

93. (Previously Presented) The apparatus of claim 56, further comprising means for translating the expansion device relative to the tubing.

94. (Original) The apparatus of claim 93, wherein the translating means is a tractor.

95. (Previously Presented) The apparatus of claim 56, wherein the expansion device is provided in combination with at least one seal adapted to contain a pressure differential thereacross and induce a translating force.

96. (Previously Presented) The apparatus of claim 56, wherein the expansion device is located between a pair of seals.

97. (Original) The apparatus of claim 96, wherein the expansion device is located between a leading seal and a trailing seal, the leading seal being coupled to the expansion device such that a pressure differential across the seal tends to urge the expansion device forward.

98. (Previously Presented) The apparatus of claim 96, wherein the pressurizing system is provided between the seals.

99. (Previously Presented) The apparatus of claim 98, wherein the pressurizing system is in the form of a pulse generator.

100. (Previously Presented) The apparatus of claim 96, wherein the pressurizing system is adapted to supply elevated pressure fluid from a source externally of a volume between the seals.

101. (Original) The apparatus of claim 56, further comprising means for supplying fluid.

102. (Previously Presented) The apparatus of claim 56, in combination with a fluid to be pressurized.

103. (Original) The apparatus of claim 102, wherein the fluid comprises a lubricant.

104. (Previously Presented) The apparatus of claim 102, wherein the fluid has a viscosity selected to minimize leakage past seals associated with the apparatus.

105. (Cancelled)

106. – 114. (Cancelled)

115. (Original) A method of expanding tubing by extending a wall of the tubing, the method comprising:

isolating a portion of tubing containing an expansion device;

applying a base pressure to the isolated portion of tubing, the base pressure creating a differential pressure across a wall of the tubing below the yield pressure of the tubing wall;

applying pressure pulses to the isolated portion of tubing in excess of said base pressure such that the tubing is expanded; and

translating the expansion device to occupy the expanded tubing.

116. – 120. (Cancelled)

121. (Currently Amended) A method of expanding tubing, the method comprising:

applying a varying fluid pressure to tubing having an internal volume, the varying fluid pressure serving at least in part to increase said volume; and

advancing a mechanical device [[is]] through the tubing to occupy said increased volume.

122. (Original) The method of claim 121, wherein the device is advanced in stepwise fashion in concert with a series of variations in fluid pressure.

123. (Original) The method of claim 122, wherein during periods of lower pressure the mechanical expansion device retains expansion produced during periods of elevated fluid pressure.

124. (Currently Amended) An apparatus for expanding tubing downhole, the apparatus comprising:

a pulse generator configured to generate and apply a varying fluid pressure to the tubing such that the tubing is expanded, and

at least one seal for isolating a portion of tubing to be expanded from ambient fluid, said at least one seal being adapted to permit a degree of leakage thereacross.[[.]]

125. (Previously Presented) The apparatus of claim 124, wherein a plurality of seal members are provided, each seal member adapted to maintain a fluid pressure differential thereacross.

126. (Original) The apparatus of claim 125, wherein at least five seal members are provided.

127. (Original) The apparatus of claim 124, wherein the at least one seal comprises a labyrinth seal.

128. (Previously Presented) An apparatus for expanding tubing downhole, the apparatus comprising:

pressurizing system for applying a varying fluid pressure to the tubing; and

an expansion cone adapted to retain expansion induced by elevated fluid pressure, the expansion cone includes a plurality of fluid outlets on a sloped surface thereof for communicating pressurized fluid from the pressuring system to an inner diameter of the tubing.

129. (Original) The apparatus of claim 128, wherein the expansion device comprises a shallow angle cone.

130. (Original) The apparatus of claim 128, wherein the cone angle no more than 11 degrees.

131. – 140. (Cancelled)

141. (Previously Presented) A method of expanding tubing, the method comprising:
applying a varying fluid pressure to the tubing, wherein a portion of tubing to be expanded is at least partially isolated from ambient fluid by at least one seal, and a varying pressure differential is maintained across the at least one seal, and wherein the at least one seal is arranged to provide for a degree of leakage thereacross and lubricates the at least one seal; and

producing a pressure pulse, and an associated elevated fluid pressure, which then decays as leakage occurs across the seal.

142. – 147. (Cancelled)

Please add the following new claims:

148. (New) An apparatus for expanding tubing downhole, the apparatus comprising:
a pressurizing system configured to apply a varying fluid pressure to the tubing such that the tubing is expanded; and

at least one first seal member disposed proximate an end of the pressurizing system and at least one second seal member disposed proximate another end of the pressurizing system, wherein the seal members are configured to isolate a portion of tubing to be expanded from ambient fluid, wherein each seal member is configured to leak.

149. (New) An apparatus for expanding tubing downhole, the apparatus comprising:
a pressurizing system configured to apply a varying fluid pressure to the tubing such that the tubing is expanded, wherein the pressurizing system comprises a member for increasing the pressure within the tubing while reducing the pressure externally of the tubing; and

at least one first seal member disposed proximate an end of the pressurizing system and at least one second seal member disposed proximate another end of the pressurizing system, wherein the seal members are configured to isolate a portion of tubing to be expanded from ambient fluid.

150. (New) The apparatus of claim 149, further comprising a reciprocating pump operatively associated with at least one one-way valve.

151. (New) An apparatus for expanding tubing downhole, the apparatus comprising:
a pressurizing system configured to apply a varying fluid pressure to the tubing such that the tubing is expanded;

at least one first seal member disposed proximate an end of the pressurizing system and at least one second seal member disposed proximate another end of the pressurizing system, wherein the seal members are configured to isolate a portion of tubing to be expanded from ambient fluid; and

a member for reducing the fluid pressure externally of the tubing.

152. (New) The apparatus of claim 151, wherein said member for reducing the fluid pressure externally of the tubing comprises an injection member configured to inject a gas into the fluid surrounding the tubing.